

THE INDYPENDENT

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PHOTO: AP

Middle East Coverage, pages 6 - 8

BY CHRIS ANDERSON

Within hours of the launch of the Israeli bombardment of Lebanon, the photos of dead Lebanese raced across the Internet. Shot by AP photographers and released by Hanady Salman of the As-Safir newspaper in Beirut, they are heart wrenching and stomach churning. Children's blackened bodies lie in the wreckage of a burned-out jeep (*see centerfold*). A man with a blossom of blood running down his face staggers out of rubble. An eight-year-old girl is roughly lifted up by her ankles, her lifeless head hanging limply and her small mouth partially open.

The Western press, of course, largely ignored these photographs — a few of the less-graphic photos released by Salman were used in *Newsweek*, the *New York Times* and the *New York Post*. The mainstream media preferred instead to focus on the damaged buildings, action shots of the Israeli military or shrouded bodies of the dead.

Publishing a few photographs of injured or dead Lebanese does little to break through the narrative that

conditions the public to accept the war as reasonable: Myths that Israel is responding to terrorism; the toll is similar on both sides; and Israel and Hezbollah are military equals, exchanging blows daily.

The press tends to show as little death as it can — whether in Lebanon, Gaza or Iraq. The photos on the front page of the July 17 edition of the *New York Times* are typical: above the fold were scenes of Israeli corpses covered in white sheeting. Partly below the fold was a photo captioned, "A night of bombing produced rubble in a neighborhood that is a Hezbollah stronghold." A Lebanese man stares at the wreckage. The Lebanese, it seems, simply lose their homes, while Israelis lose their lives.

Despite the disproportionate numbers — at least 20 times as many Lebanese civilians have died as Israeli ones — the reporting and visuals strain for "balance." The dominant photo inside the *Times* on July 17 was of an Israeli family grieving over the death of a family member in Haifa. The next day's paper featured a collage of sobbing families from "all sides" of the conflict.

Images are most powerful in the heat of battle. If the

media were publishing more of the readily available photos of blown-up and incinerated Lebanese children, then the outcry could help force an end to the bombings. After all, it was the endless repetition of images of a naked child, screaming and running after being burned by napalm and the summary execution of a Vietnamese prisoner during the Tet offensive that helped solidify opposition to the war.

It is easy for Americans to marvel at this "endless cycle of violence" engulfing the Middle East. We should remember, however, that Osama bin Laden himself watched the 1982 bombing of Lebanon and first conceived his plans to demolish American towers. "While I was looking at these destroyed towers in Lebanon," he said in 2004, "it sparked in my mind that the tyrant should be punished with the same and that we should destroy towers in America, so that it tastes what we taste and would so be deterred from killing our children and women."

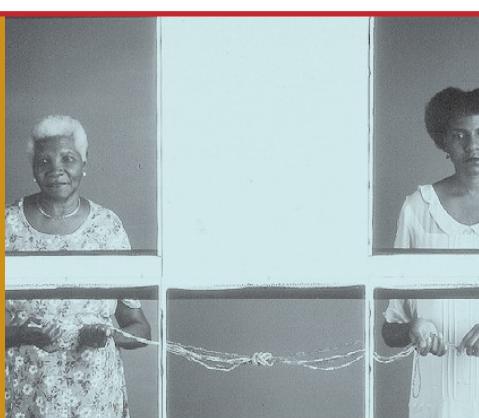
If destruction visits the shores of the United States again, we must never be able to ask, with our uniquely American innocence — "why do they hate us?" They hate us, in part, because we close our eyes.



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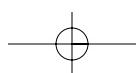


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WHAT IS INDYMEDIA?

With autonomous chapters in more than 120 cities throughout the world, the Independent Media Center is an international network of volunteer media activists.

The IMC seeks to create a new media ethic by providing progressive, in-depth and accurate coverage of issues. We are a community-based organization using media to facilitate political and cultural self-representation. We seek to analyze issues affecting individuals, communities and ecosystems by providing media tools and space to those seeking to communicate. We espouse open dialogue and placing the means of communication and creativity back in the hands of the people, away from the drive of profit.

The *Indydependent* is funded by benefits, subscriptions, donations, grants and ads from organizations and individuals with similar missions.

WHAT CAN I DO TO GET INVOLVED?

The IMC has an open door. You can write and distribute for *The Indydependent*, videotape events and rallies, update the website, self-publish articles to the web, take photos or just help us run the office. As an organization relying on volunteer support, we encourage all forms of participation.

The print team reserves the right to edit articles for length, content and clarity. We welcome your participation in the entire editorial process.

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MATTHEW SMITH

BY NICHOLAS POWERS

On June 10, I watched police tackle a man with dreadlocks on Nostrand Avenue. He was handcuffed amid an angry crowd. I parked my car and jumped out looking for answers. My reporter's notepad flashed in my hand, it is my shield and mirror, protecting me from commitment to a side while reflecting the consequences of those who take one.

On opposite sides were the police and people of Bed-Stuy. The former enforce minor laws in the name of quality of life and the latter can't afford a life of quality. The new cafes on Fulton and the houses for sale on Gates are for those moving in who can afford them. Those who can't are pushed by the line of gentrification that is guarded by the police.

The trouble had begun before I arrived, when another Black man, 22-year-old Zackary Ballard, had been arrested for, it seems, being on the wrong side of that line.

Ballard's father, Zachary Kitt, told me he asked why they were taking him and his son said, "I don't know, Daddy."

An officer told him, "There is a warrant on his car." The father answered, "That's my car. If there is a warrant arrest me not my son." The cop cut him off, "You had a one-shot deal to talk to me." Hard-eyed spectators watched.

In Bed-Stuy a young Black man in custody can be a martyr because

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

No Such Thing as Empowered Prostitutes

What's with this whitewashing of prostitution in India being pushed by *The Indydependent* ("Sex Workers in the City of Joy," June 29)? Heavy on agenda and light on facts, this is shoddy. Not one mention of the millions of men who use the bodies of girls and women to masturbate themselves is nothing less than the protection of men's supposed right to demand sex from women anytime and any way they want it dressed up as "empowerment for women."

There's no mention of the pimps and organized criminals who control prostitution in India and who have emptied whole villages in nearby Nepal of girls aged 15 to 50 in order to constantly replace the short-lived girls who

don't survive long in prostitution. The diseases, physical abuse and post-traumatic stress disorders among prostitutes around the world call out the abject lie that what sex workers fear most is "bad reputations" and "stigma." They fear getting raped daily, and have to keep pimps happy lest they face the consequences of their unhappiness.

Prostitution, human trafficking, sexual slavery and the sexual exploitation of homeless, poor, dark-skinned girls have fuck-all to do with George W. Bush. Be radical, go to the root of the problem, and that isn't codifying into law men's right to wet their dicks with an impoverished girl's body holes and use their female bodies as semen spittoons to catch their squirming fluids.

—MRS. T

Commentary on the police-induced June riot in Bed-Stuy

Crossing the Line

his crime, whatever it is, cannot outweigh history. The cops walked Ballard against a backdrop of collective memory in which white men with guns and badges drove Blacks to jail or to their death. What came next confirmed for the crowd that police abuse power. They sped away with no lights or siren and rammed a Hyundai with two people inside into a deli. Ambulances came and took everyone but a crying female passenger still in her seat. People surrounded the crumpled cars.

"There was a guy with dreads who had a cell-phone camera taking pictures," said 35-year-old Regina Ford. "He was saying, I got you motherfuckers on film. That's when things got rough." She said NYPD vans drove in and men with shotguns and dogs ran out, shoving people to the sidewalks.

A whirlpool of violence spun along Nostrand. That's when I drove in. Panic and rage blinded everyone in the confusion of punches and shoving. The cops pushed us back and we stood holding anger in our fists. A woman stomped her foot, "It ain't right how they did him!" as police gripped their batons and stared across the thin yellow line. Nearby, a man blasted a Malcolm X speech on police brutality from his boom-box.

"I've seen this before," said 65-year-old Lee Guest. "They race around our streets endangering people." He gave me flyers showing guns and a plea to "Stop the Shooting." Before he finished, a lanky man ducked under the police line and jogged down the street. Cops wrestled him down. "Yo! He's just trying to see his family," someone yelled.

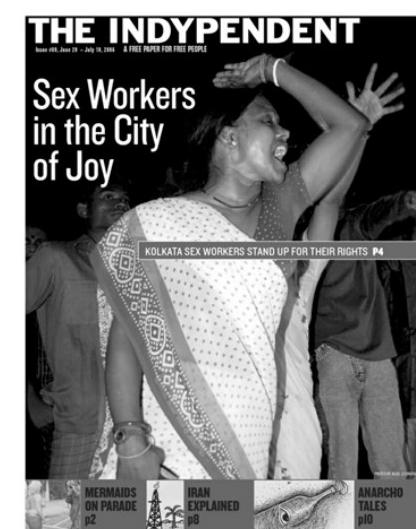
An older man leaned on his Pan-African walking stick, "Better not be a scratch on 'em!" Young men slapped hands and laughed nervously to prove they were not scared but the danger was over. All they had left was bragging rights.

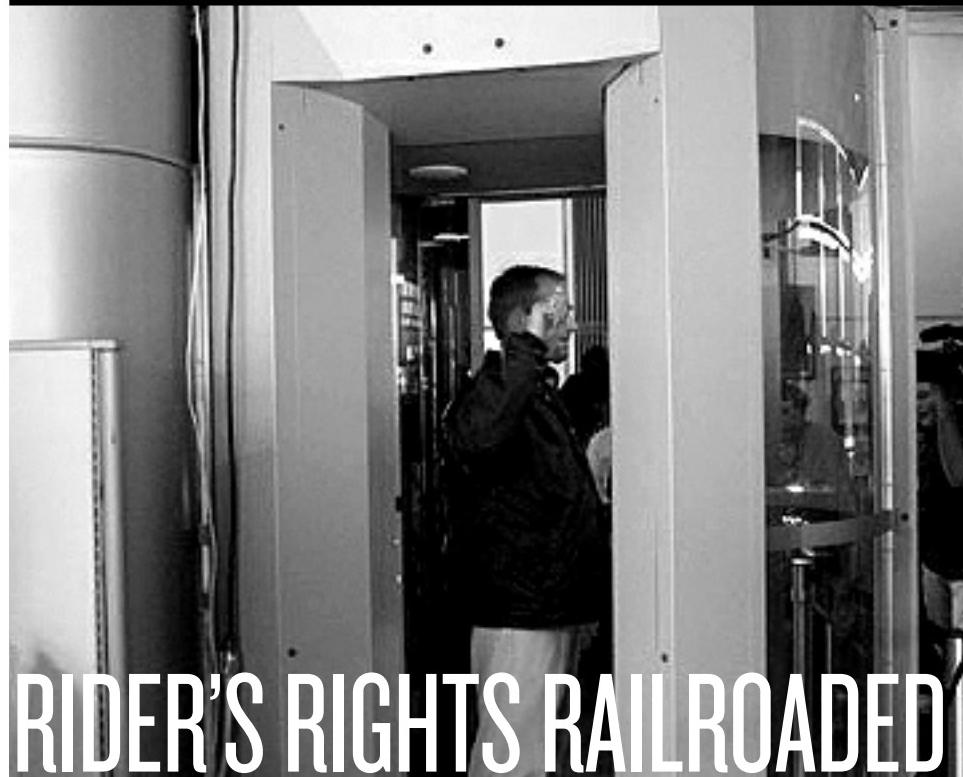
Djibril Toure of the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement said police over-reaction is policy: "It's no coincidence that the High Impact Zone overlaps Nostrand Avenue," he said, "You have poor people living in the path of gentrification and police using zero-tolerance tactics. It's the perfect storm." Walking away, I saw flyers with the plea to "Stop the Shooting" stamped by footprints into the gutter.

I drove to the 79th Precinct. The man who took pictures with his cell phone limped out. He was circled by politicians, dread-locked activists and Nation of Islam members. I asked Councilman Charles Barron about the riot. "There was no need for the shotguns or canines or the helicopter," he said, "the best thing [the police] could have done was leave quickly."

I got in my car and my phone rang. It was my friend who recently got a job. "Do you know of houses for sale around you?" He asked. "At this rate" I said, "you can stand outside and take your pick." I put down my reporter's notepad and thought of my privilege. I moved to Bed-Stuy two years ago. Recently I got a job that allows me to read for-sale signs with interest. It's easy to speak from one side of the line but live on the other without admitting my choice.

I wanted Ballard's innocence to choose for me. The public relations officer for the NYPD told me he was wanted for robbery, petty larceny, harassment and unlawful possession of marijuana. I called Ballard's father and left a message asking if it was true. I never heard back from him.





RIDER'S RIGHTS RAILROADED

PATH TRAIN COMMUTERS SEARCHED: DHS is making waves with its new surveillance technology.

PHOTO: ELIZABETH WEILL-GREENBERG

BY ELIZABETH WEILL-GREENBERG
Citybelt.org

Like a twisted elementary school class show-and-tell, on July 11 the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) demonstrated its latest effort to search commuters and thwart an attack on New Jersey and New York City's transit lines.

From July 13 to 27 the DHS will require passengers at the Exchange Place PATH station in Jersey City to be searched using millimeter-wave technology. During rush hour, passengers will be selected at random for screening; at other times all PATH riders will be screened.

Approximately 15,000 people use the Exchange Place PATH station daily.

Passengers will either walk through an open area lined with sensors or stand in what looks like a glass elevator. An image of the person is generated on a computer screen and is supposed to show large objects hidden under the person's clothing. The screening should take no more than a couple of minutes, DHS officials said.

This is the second phase of a congressionally mandated program called the Rail Security Pilot Project; its results will be reported to Congress in the fall. The federal pricetag is \$10 million.

"The technology we're testing today is designed to look for larger objects like a suicide belt vest and not smaller objects," said DHS spokesman Christopher Kelly. "It's calibrated to look for bigger things."

Kelly said that the images generated also "protect one's individual privacy."

"There's no way you can see any kind of body part," said Kelly. "You can't see any

underwear. It's designed to look at big bulky objects that may not typically be there. This is really just designed to check on explosives."

Reporters at the DHS press briefing at Exchange Place were told not to take photos of the computer images for "security reasons." The image generated is highly pixelated – the person's body, or even gender, cannot be made out. If an anomaly is detected, it is shown as a colored splotch.

From there, the screener, a Transportation Security Administration-certified contractor with at least six months of airport experience, performs a secondary screening, in which the suspect is wanded and subjected to a pat-down search, according to Kelly.

Much like the widespread NSA wiretapping program and the random searches in New York City's subways, the new program at Exchange Place shows that the government is casting its surveillance net wider and wider.

"It always troubles us to see a trend in which citizens are encouraged to waive their constitutional rights in the course of their daily affairs," said Scott Morgan, associate director of Flex Your Rights, a Washington, D.C.-based organization opposed to unconstitutional searches.

SECURITY VS. CIVIL LIBERTIES?

The surveillance debate is often framed as civil liberties versus security, as if the two were mutually exclusive. But there are serious questions as to the effectiveness of random searches and omnipresent government spying.

Since New York instituted its random search policy on the subways a year ago, there have been five arrests all unrelated to terrorism – for drug possession, disorderly conduct and other minor charges – according to the

Associated Press (July 9, 2006).

City Belt requested information from DHS and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey on how many terror suspects were apprehended and how many people were arrested on charges unrelated to terror since the random bag search policy was instituted last July for travelers using the Port Authority's PATH system, the Port Authority Bus Terminal, AirTrain JFK and AirTrain Newark.

We have not yet received an answer.

"Suspicionless searches – of anyone walking by, searches with no particularized suspicion, no probable cause to suspect the individual being searched is likely to be involved in a specific crime as the fourth amendment requires – these searches are always going to have a very, very low hit rate," said Morgan. "It's very hard to find what you're looking for when you don't use any criteria to decide who to scrutinize."

WAR ON TERROR, MEET WAR ON DRUGS

While the pilot program at Exchange Place is supposedly only looking for explosives, if "illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia are found during the screening process, a Port Authority law enforcement officer will respond," according to informational literature published by DHS.

As Lee Tien, senior staff attorney with the Electronic Frontier Foundation, pointed out, these searches tell PATH users: "Anything you carry may be used against you."

That was certainly Larry Bailey's fear in February when DHS tested the first phase of the Rail Security Pilot Program at Exchange Place. Commuters were asked to go through screening devices similar to those found at airports.

Bailey was carrying a small bag of marijuana. Bailey, a comedian and blogger now living in Long Island, refused to be searched and left the station.

"I really don't think there's anything you can do aside from completely stripping away peoples' civil liberties and rights," he said. "What we're trying to do is stop up all the leaks. But one pops up somewhere else."

But despite the serious questions as to the effectiveness of random searches, the surveillance machine still pushes ahead. After all, DHS puts on a great show.

This article originally appeared on citybelt.org. For more information, see flexyourrights.org.

Finding Common Ground

Mahlik Rahim (right) one of the founding members of the Common Ground Collective (CGC), an organization based in New Orleans that is leading the grassroots rebuilding effort, spoke on July 14 at the 6th Street Community Center's benefit show for the organization. Rahim spoke of the group's achievements. Within three weeks of operation, the CGC had the only functioning healthcare facility in New Orleans. In the last 10 months, the collective has given 80,000 people direct service and 100,000 people indirect service, and disbursed \$100 million worth of supplies. Through house restoration, food preparation, providing shelter and medical services, the CGC, without local, state or federal assistance, is still helping hundreds of people who were affected by Hurricane Katrina. With the anniversary of Katrina only a month away, Rahim asked the audience to help survivors and to make sure that "the type of racism that occurred in New Orleans never happens again."

For more information or to make a donation, go to www.commongroundrelief.org.

— PHOTO & TEXT: JESS GARMAN



Housing Court Woes

As a housing organizer in Bushwick, Brooklyn, Yolanda Coca butts heads with the most difficult judges while defending the rights of tenants.

And the deck is stacked against tenants in housing court. According to the New York County Lawyers Association, of the approximate 350,000 residential cases filed in housing court each year, only 11.9 percent of the tenant litigants had legal representation. The rest are *pro se* – forced to represent themselves. If they are lucky they will find a housing advocate like Coca to shepherd them through the process.

"In the beginning the landlords' lawyers wanted to intimidate me, but when I demonstrated my knowledge, they warmed up," said Coca, who has been advocating for tenants in housing court for 11 years. "Many judges know and respect me."

Coca's biggest challenge in housing court is the "mean attitude" of some judges and the landlord lawyers.

Pro se tenant Pat Senior knows what Coca is talking about. In 2005, Senior says, Judge George Heymann evicted her from her apartment at University Towers in downtown Brooklyn on a non-payment case in which the papers were never properly served. Senior says Judge Heymann was late to court and when she asked to be able to ask questions and defend herself Judge Heymann had a "nasty, sharp tone." Senior claimed exchanges between her and Heymann deteriorated so badly that she tried to go before a different judge.

"I asked for him to be recused because he was biased," Senior said.

Heymann's tardiness has caught the attention of tenant lawyers and advocates. Housing court usually opens at 9:30, Monday through Friday.

"I noted it in my book; I was shocked at how late he was," said a rookie housing attorney who wished not to give his name for fear of retaliation. "When his court is open and he's not there, nothing can move forward."

On July 13, the judge waltzed in around 10:30 with a coffee cup in one hand and a calculator in the other. Public housing tenants filled the courtroom almost to capacity waiting for the judge to hear their cases. I counted over 90 cases on Heymann's schedule but the judge didn't call his first case until 11:20.

Attorneys and advocates say tardiness is an accepted norm in Brooklyn housing court and judges do have paperwork that keeps them busy.

Though Coca has mixed feelings about Heymann, her biggest nemesis has been Judge Dawn Jimenez. Jimenez was appointed to her housing court position five years ago after working as an attorney at Borah, Goldstein, Altschuler & Schwartz, a large law firm that represents landlords.

"When I first came to her court she did everything to make my life difficult," Coca said. "I shook my head about a decision and she yelled, 'Don't come back to my courtroom.'"

Judge Heymann is up for re-appointment in housing court this month and Judge Jimenez is looking to be appointed to another position in civil court. To make a complaint, call City-Wide Task Force on Housing Court, Inc. 212-962-4266.

Bennett Baumer is a tenant organizer for the Metropolitan Council on Housing (metcouncil.net). Contact: Bennett@metcouncil.net



BEING THE MEDIA: Peer Trainers Habiba Ahmad and Derrick Dawkins (standing) discuss the importance of good researching skills with members of the Youth Channel: Christine Allen, Damaris Castro and Johnathan Hernandez (sitting). *PHOTO: JESSIE CARPENTER*

OFF THE AIR

CABLE COMPANIES THREATEN COMMUNITY ACCESS

BY JESSIE CARPENTER

On an early Thursday morning, in a building tucked away on 59th street between 10th and 11th Avenues, a group of young people researched topics for an upcoming segment they would be producing for a show called "Manhattan Neighborhood Network Defense Against Media Nonsense." The room was plain, but the enthusiasm of nine high school students and two trainers brought it to life.

"This program gives me production skills," said high school sophomore Adahm Walcott, one of the young people working on the segment that day. "I have ideas to do things and without the Youth Channel I wouldn't have a chance to put these ideas to use."

In a time when programs like Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN) struggle to stay afloat, the Communications Opportunity, Promotion and Enhancement (COPE) Act threatens its existence.

"Right now the government is trying to cut us off, take away our funding, and take us off the air," said Youth Channel member Timara Manson. "I don't think they should do that. What we do here is important."

Introduced by Senate Commerce Chairman Ted Stevens (R-AK), and House Energy and Commerce Chairman Joe Barton (R-TX), the COPE Act, if passed by the Senate, would allow billion-dollar telecommunication companies to enter the cable business and will make using the Internet for educational purposes substantially more difficult. On June 8, the act passed in the U.S. House of Representatives by a vote of 321-101.

Betty Yu, a community outreach and media specialist with MNN, said the act would have a crushing effect on public access television. "The COPE Act, if passed by the Senate, will limit the future funding and channel space for Public, Educational and Governmental (PEG) Access television," said Yu.

The Senate has constructed a companion bill to the COPE Act known as S.2686. If passed, it, too, would be devastating to community media throughout the country. A report issued by the Alliance for Community Media showed that this legislation would be a major blow to PEG, leading to funding cuts of 35 to 50 percent.

Although the COPE Act was passed by the House, Michael Eisenmenger and Betty Yu of MNN hope that this will not be the year that COPE becomes law.

"[Senator] Stevens faces some difficulty," said Yu. "He needs at least 60 votes to have COPE pass through Senate and it doesn't look as though he will get all 60."

Although the New York City Council passed a resolution against the COPE Act by a 50-0 vote, eight of the city's 13 congresspeople voted in favor of COPE including Democrats Charles Rangel, Major Owens, Gregory Meeks, Edolphous Towns and Eliot Engel. The grassroots lobby of MNN and other groups did resonate with Carolyn Maloney of the 14th Congressional District.

"Maloney was a co-sponsor of COPE and changed her whole view because of the education we provided her with," said Yu.

While the future of public access remains unknown, those whom it affects most struggle to keep it intact.

"If this bill passes, our funding would be cut and then we would really be out of luck," said Youth Channel peer trainer Habiba Ahmad. "Coming to MNN Youth Channel has changed my life and the lives of the youth involved with the program. It would be a very sad day if COPE passes."

POLITICAL OUTSIDERS RACE TO QUALIFY FOR BALLOT

Can You Spare a Signature?

BY ERIN THOMPSON

Standing in Union Square on a hot July day, against a tide of disinterested New Yorkers walking through the gauntlet of organic cheese, homemade Vermont jam and the quintessential "imagine" tourist photograph, Jerry Kahn holds a clipboard and repeats his pitch, "Excuse me, are you registered to vote?"

Most people brush past Kahn without a look, some manage a smile, others pepper him with irrelevant apologies, "I'm a Democrat, sorry," a young woman carelessly calls out. "Not right now," says a man in shorts and a t-shirt. "Thanks," and "I'm good" are tossed out by a young man with long black hair and a metal band t-shirt. "You hear that a lot – no thanks – like I'm selling something," sighs Kahn.

In a half hour of petitioning, Kahn has garnered three or four signatures. "There's no such thing as an easy place," said Kahn, who as a volunteer for the Green Party petitioning drive will spend most of his nights and weekends for the next month soliciting signatures. "For this spot, this is pretty okay," said Kahn. He prefers petitioning at 125th street or the Bronx. "Generally speaking... the richer the neighborhood, the worse we'll do," he said.

As a third party without permanent ballot status, the Greens are the last group of petitioners to hit the streets this summer, trying to gather the 15,000 valid signatures required to get their "peace slate" of five statewide candidates on the ballot in the 2006 general election.

Jumping into the political arena against the well-oiled political machines of the major parties is not for the faint of heart. Besides contending with the rebukes of New Yorkers, many third party and grassroots primary challengers deal with cumbersome signature protocols and go up against flocks of high-priced lawyers hired by established politicians to comb potential opponents' lists for wrong addresses, illegible signatures or a host of other flaws that disqualify the petitions.

THE TALE OF A "POLITICAL VIRGIN"

The idealism of progressive candidates seeking to participate in the electoral system can be quickly dissipated. Claudia Flanagan attempted to run in the democratic primary in 2005 for the city's 2nd district city council seat. "I thought... if I'm going to criticize this stuff, maybe I should be in it, find out," said Flanagan. Flanagan was one of 11 candidates petitioning for slots in the primary, and said she faced a Democratic Party pushing to elect Rosie Mendez, a gay Latina as the successor to outgoing city councilperson Margarita Lopez.

"Their strategy was a smart one. They wanted to knock everybody off the ballot except three white guys from the northern

part of the district, so [Mendez] would look like the populist candidate... going up against the rich white guys," she said.

Flanagan needed 900 signatures from her district, but conventional wisdom dictated that in order to withstand a political challenge from Democrats, she would need three times that. But being what she called "a political virgin," Flanagan only collected about 1000 signatures. She was subsequently knocked out of the primary race when the Mendez campaign successfully challenged 150-200 of her signatures.

Robert Jereski tried to challenge Carolyn Maloney in a 2004 Democratic primary for New York's Upper East Side Congressional seat. He collected 2166 signatures. After challenges by Maloney's lawyers, Jereski came up only four shy of the 1250 he needed. "[It was] not just that they challenged us, they were really haranguing, making a scene, being exasperated," said Jereski of Maloney's lawyers.

When he filed to counter the challenges, his appeal was dismissed on a technicality. "I was obligated to serve [Maloney's campaign] with the papers," said Jereski. "I went to the congressional office. They wouldn't [take] the papers. The campaign office... locked the doors. They hid."

The best defense against being knocked off the ballot is to rack up a vast surplus of signatures. For anti-war Democrat Jonathan Tasini that meant collecting 40,000 signatures earlier this summer to win a place on the September primary ballot. Like the Greens, Tasini needed 15,000 valid signatures. "I think that if we had come in with a lower number, it might have been worth [the Clinton campaign's] trouble to take a look," said Stephanie Cannon, Tasini's campaign manager.

For the Greens, and Jerry Kahn, that means more long, hot days soliciting signatures. "If we come in with a petition of under 30,000, they may see it as a possibility to knock it out. If we come in with 40,000, they might not see it as worth it," said Green Party Senate candidate Howie Hawkins. "I'm concerned [the Democrats] may not even want the Greens to offer the opportunity to vote for an anti-war candidate."

But even getting on the ballot in most cases is a largely symbolic victory. After being disqualified to run as a Democrat, Flanagan eventually ended up on the Libertarian ticket, receiving 623 votes in the general election. "I had never run for office before, [I'm] sure I never will again," she said.

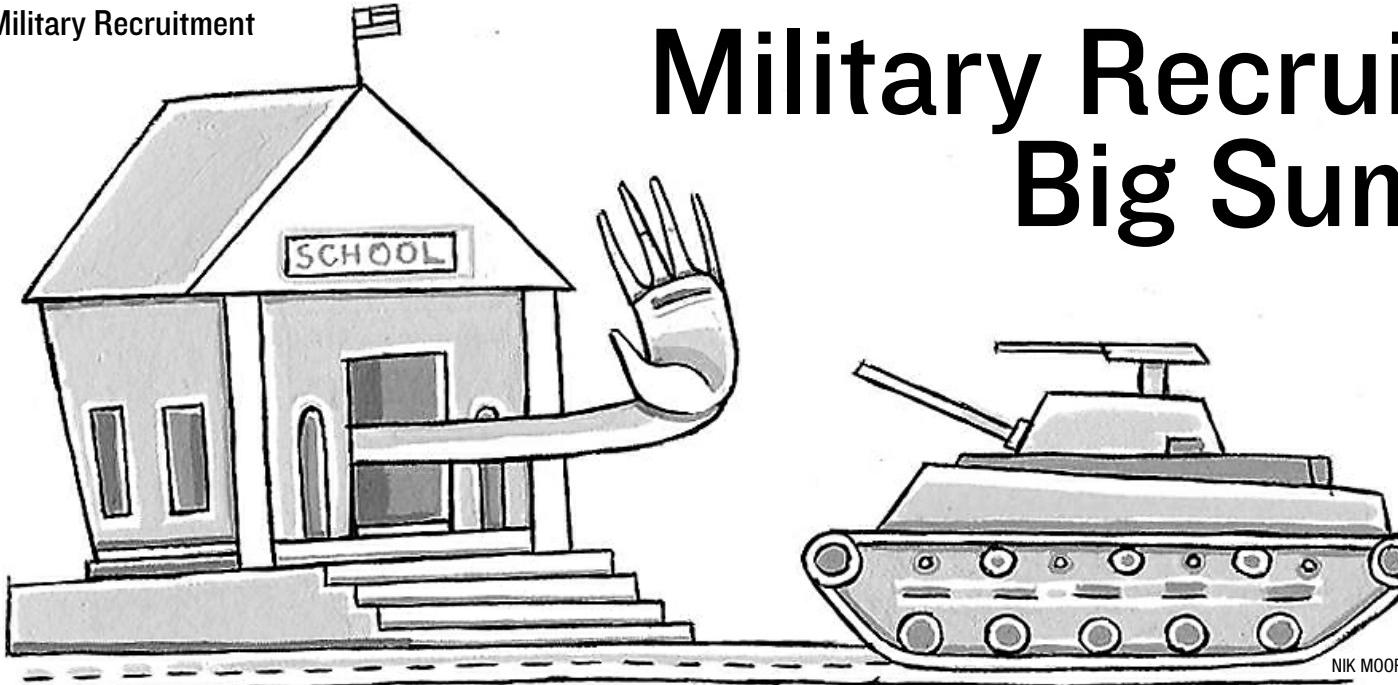
However, Jereski emphasizes the importance of progressive candidates staging campaigns. "Whatever the hurdles are, a well-organized campaign can overcome them. Activists should really think about taking an active seat in voting on important issues," Jereski said. "Even if they lose the election, they've had an impact."

For the full version of this story, see indypendent.org

IT'S NOT EASY BEING GREEN: Jerry Kahn, shown at 125th St. in Harlem, collecting signatures for the Green Party. In order to appear as a third party on the November ballot, the Greens must get 15,000 valid signatures by Aug. 22. *PHOTO: JESSE CARPENTER*



Military Recruitment



BY SIERRA FREEMAN

Dariana Taulino has dreamed of joining the military since she was a little girl. She likes the structure, discipline and the sense of shared purpose. Now 18 and a graduate of The School of Excellence in the Bronx, she should be on her way to boot camp. But with the war raging in Iraq, family and friends have convinced her to stay out for now.

"I still want to go the Air Force," Taulino says, "but everyone has been telling me to go to college. With college you can drop out when you want, with the Air Force it's not like that."

Taulino's quandary is being played out all over the country as potential recruits finish high school and weigh making the biggest decisions of their young lives against the backdrop of war in the Middle East.

In New York, new recruiting stations have been open in communities like East Harlem and the Bronx. More recruiters with professional-level sales skills are hitting the streets. At the recruiting station in the Fordham part of the Bronx, the use of Hummers blasting Reggaeton on a busy street corner is not uncommon. Aggressive recruiter presence can also be found

throughout the city's public high schools.

"I couldn't believe this huge man was walking in the hallways," says Carey Feliciano, the Chair of the Uptown Youth for Peace and Justice who works with students in Harlem, the Bronx and Washington Heights. "I was scared; I can imagine high school students. The recruiters are in the schools, in the hallways, and at the best tables at their college fairs."

RECRUITING ON STEROIDS

The military's annual recruiting budget now surpasses \$4 billion.

Besides increasing the number of recruiters and spending more on advertising, the military now utilizes powerful new databases that track a wide array of personal information about young people age 16-25, including their consumer habits. The Army has also boosted enlistment bonuses, lowered fitness requirements, increased the maximum enlistment age to 42 and doubled the number of recruits it will accept who score in the lowest bracket on aptitude tests. In the past five years, the number of waivers it grants to recruits who have criminal records has doubled, according to a recent *Chicago Sun-Times* report.

The military's relentless drive for recruits appears to be yielding results. After missing its

2005 recruiting goal by 6,600 enlistees, the Army has met all of its monthly recruiting goals this year. With the school year winding down, the Army saw its monthly recruiting total jump from 5,806 in May to 8,756 in June. To date, the Army has added 51,615 new recruits since the fiscal year began in October, according to Julia Bobick, a spokesperson for the U.S. Army Recruiting Command. The Army will need to enlist another 28,385 soldiers (or 9,700 per month) by Sept. 30 to meet its annual goal. The other military services (Air Force, Navy, Marines) are also en route to meeting their annual quotas.

Locally, the New York City Recruiting Battallion (which also encompasses Long Island, Westchester County and six northern New Jersey counties) has enlisted 1,343 new soldiers into the Army as of July 7, according to spokesperson Emilie Gockley. In FY '05, the battalion signed up 1,733 recruits.

For many young people, joining the military is a way to escape communities that offer little hope of a better future.

"My son had been talking about the Navy since he was in his last year of high school," says Debbie Jones, a mother of four who lives on the Lower East Side. "He didn't want to be like the rest of the boys on the block, selling

drugs, hanging on the street corners getting into trouble."

While young people ultimately are left with making the tough decision of choosing to enlist in the military or to go to college, a lack of information and funding for education is cited as a fundamental problem.

"People always want to blame hip-hop, the parents, the radio stations, but it's a lack of resources. Funding is going towards recruiting methods, Feliciano says. "There is no money for after-school programs and there aren't enough counter-military recruitment programs."

When the decision to enlist is made, mothers like Debbie Jones can only hope that their children made the right decision and will come home safe.

"I get nervous, I keep saying, 'What are we really fighting for?' All I can do is pray," says Jones, whose son, Bernell Carswell, will be deployed overseas for six months beginning in August. He is currently based in Atlanta.

Counter-recruiting activists at the Uptown Youth for Peace and Justice have been working hard to build a strong coalition that creates alternatives to the military. Currently the organization is planning a three-day weekend conference for September in conjunction with Brotherhood Sister Soul, The Community School for Social Justice, and the S.T.A.T.E. (Students Taking Action Toward Empowerment). The weekend conference will train students how to get the military out of their schools and offer alternatives to the military, such as hosting a career, job and college fair.

"There are options and students are not told that enough," Feliciano says. "If going to college isn't for you there are trade schools that offer job training."

(John Tarleton contributed to this report.)

Peace Activists Take On War Profiteers

BY GABRIEL RIOCABO

The year was 1976. The Shah ruled Iran. The company hired to build him a nuclear reactor was the Bechtel Corporation. Now, 30 years later, Bechtel is sitting on more than \$1 billion in Iraq reconstruction contracts and is busy building the "next generation" of nuclear weapons here at home. Meanwhile, the current Bush administration, which awarded those contracts, is busy sounding alarms about the Iranian nuclear threat.

It is these kinds of relationships that have activists pointing toward San Francisco-based Bechtel in their efforts to identify a single Iraq War profiteer to, as writer-activist Arundhati Roy has suggested, "go after."

To combat the almost limitless reach of a corporate giant that has offices in 26 countries, citizens across the United States are coordinating a multi-pronged convergence on Bechtel facilities on Aug.

6-9. Principal events are planned in: Pittsburgh, the Bay Area, Boston, Oak Ridge, Tennessee and New Mexico's Los Alamos test site (the birthplace of the atomic bomb, and now privately operated by a Bechtel-led consortium).

Activists claim Bechtel is the largest manufacturer of nuclear weapons systems in the world. It has built more than half of the nuclear facilities in the United States and has had close ties to Republican presidents since Richard Nixon.

When organizers like David Meieran of the Thomas Merton Center in Pittsburgh say they "are opening another front in combating the pillars of war and empire," they have in mind people like George Shultz, director and president of Bechtel before his appointment as Secretary of State in 1982 and more recently a member of the hawkish Committee for the Liberation of Iraq. Activists see Shultz's influence as indicative of the complicity between Bechtel

and its allies in government.

As Shultz said before the war: "If there's work to be done in Iraq, Bechtel's the kind of company that could do it."

The dates of the protests coincide with the 61st anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, at the end of World War II.

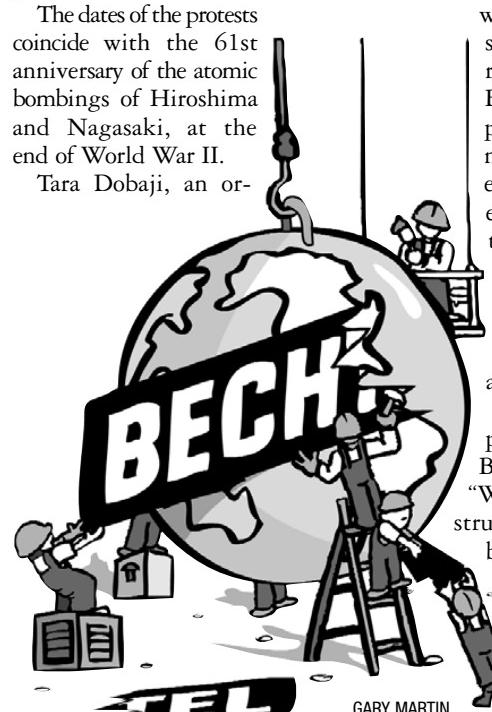
Tara Dobaji, an or-

ganizer in Alameda County, CA., where Bechtel is the fourth-largest employer, take an optimistic approach. She stresses the need to "inform the people

who are part of these systems what they are responsible for. Because they're good people." Bechtel, she notes, could put its expertise to many projects such as "rebuilding the Bay Bridge" damaged in an earthquake 17 years ago, "instead of nuclear weapons and war profiteering."

But as former Bechtel president Steve Bechtel Sr. once said: "We are not in the construction and engineering business. We are in the business of making money."

For more
see August6.org.



• • • BECHTEL'S 'BEST OF' • • •

From the People Who Brought you the Atomic Bomb!

"BIG DIG," BOSTON

At \$1.8 billion per mile the Central Artery/Tunnel is the world's most expensive highway. Bechtel is accountable for at least \$1 billion in cost overruns. The project, scheduled for completion in 1998, remains unfinished. After a woman was crushed to death by concrete ceiling tiles in a Big Dig Tunnel, the state found more than 60 other "compromised" spots in that tunnel alone.

YUCCA MOUNTAIN, NEVADA

Received a \$1.9 billion contract to build a nuclear waste repository on lands belonging to the Western Shoshone nation. Effectively "double dipping," they will clean up the very waste their plants produce.

COCHABAMBA, BOLIVIA

After receiving water rights in a single-bidder auction, Bechtel raised rates by 50 percent or more. Eventually forced out by general strikes, they sue the people of Bolivia for \$50 million and lost.

IRAQ

Built petrochemical plants used to make weapons used against Iran in the early '80s. Contracted for \$1.03 billion to rebuild infrastructure after the 2003 invasion. Almost all deadlines unmet, Bechtel was paid undisclosed "fixed fee" on top of contract anyway.

MIDDLE EAST



What Israel Is Fighting For

BY TANYA REINHART

TEL AVIV, Israel—Whatever the fate of the captive soldier Gilad Shalit, the Israeli army's war in Gaza is not about him. As senior security analyst Alex Fishman widely reported, the army was preparing for an attack months earlier and was constantly pushing for it, with the goal of destroying the Hamas infrastructure and its government.

The army initiated an escalation on June 8 when it assassinated Abu Samhadana, a senior appointee of the Hamas government, and intensified its shelling of civilians in the Gaza Strip. By June 12, the government had already authorized a larger-scale action, but postponed it in the wake of the global reverberation caused by the killing of civilians in the air force bombing the next day.

The capture of the soldier released the safety catch, and the operation began on June 28 with the destruction of infrastructure in Gaza and the mass detention of the Hamas leadership in the West Bank, which had also been planned weeks in advance.

In Israeli discourse, Israel ended the occupation in Gaza when it evacuated its settlers from the Strip, and the Palestinians' behavior therefore constitutes ingratitude. But there is nothing further from reality than this description.

In fact, Gaza remained under complete Israeli military control, operating from outside. Israel prevented any possibility of economic independence for the Strip and from the very beginning, Israel did not implement a single one of the clauses of the agreement on the November 2005 border crossings. Israel simply substituted the expensive occupation of Gaza with a cheap occupation, one which in Israel's view exempts it from the occupier's responsibility to maintain the Strip and from concern for the welfare and the lives of its million-and-a-half residents, as determined in the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Israel does not need this piece of land, one of the most densely populated in the world and lacking any natural resources. The problem is that one cannot let Gaza free, if one wants to keep the West Bank. A third of the occupied Palestinians live in the Gaza Strip. If they are given freedom, they would become the center of Palestinian struggle for liberation, with free access to the Western and Arab world. To control the West Bank, Israel needs full control of Gaza. The new form of control Israel has developed is turning the whole of the Strip into a prison camp completely sealed from the world.

Besieged occupied people with nothing to hope for and no alternative means of political struggle will always seek ways to fight their oppressor. The imprisoned Gaza Palestinians found a way to disrupt the life of the Israelis in the vicinity of the Strip by launching homemade Qassam rockets across the Gaza wall. These primitive rockets have rarely caused Israeli casualties; they do, however, cause physical and psychological damage and seriously disturb life in the targeted Israeli neighborhoods.

In the eyes of many Palestinians, the Qassams are a response to the war Israel has declared on them. As a student from Gaza said to the *New York Times*, "Why should we be the only ones who live in fear? With these rockets, the Israelis feel fear, too. We will have to live in peace together, or live in fear together."

The mightiest army in the Middle East has no military answer to these homemade rockets. One answer that presents itself is what Hamas has been proposing all along, and Haniyeh recently—a comprehensive ceasefire.

Hamas has proven already that it can keep its word. In the 17 months since it announced its decision to abandon armed struggle in favor of political struggle and declared a unilateral ceasefire ("tahdiya"—calm) it did not participate in the launching of Qassams,

Israel Kills the Gaza Strip

BY KRISTEN ESS

WEST BANK, Occupied Territories—Two years ago when the Israeli government began hinting publicly about "withdrawing" its occupation forces from the Gaza Strip, I interviewed everyone under the sun. "What does this mean?" was my question.

The answers were as varied as one Palestinian to the next, but they all indicated that Israel was up to no good.

West Bank human rights activist George S. Rishmawi said, "They are trading the Gaza Strip for the West Bank." Indeed. The Wall is near completion on the western side, with the east soon to begin. The Israeli government has said that the settlements blocking Jerusalem will never be removed, nor will the other major settlements throughout the West Bank.

Regarding the settlers and military forces leaving the inside of the Gaza Strip, the Gaza City director of the Palestinian Network of NGOs, Amjad Al Shawa, said, "No one is sorry to see them go, however, we know that this does not mean they are really, all of a sudden, going to end the occupation and stop attacking us." His prediction turned out to be true as well.

The most common response was that Israeli forces would take out the settlers, keep occupying the borders, land and sea, and would then use all of those avenues to destroy the Palestinian population in the Strip, all the while continuing the takeover of the West Bank.

Since ending the occupation is the one thing Israel is not willing to consider, the option promoted by the army is breaking the Palestinians by devastating brutal force. They should be starved, bombarded and terrorized with sonic booms for months, until they understand that rebelling is futile and accepting prison life is their only hope for staying alive. Their elected political system, institutions and police should be destroyed. In Israel's vision, Gaza should be ruled by gangs collaborating with the prison wards.

The Israeli army is hungry for war and will not let concerns for captive soldiers stand in its way. Since 2002 the army has argued that an "operation" along the lines of "Defensive Shield" in Jenin was also necessary in Gaza.

A year ago, on July 15 (before the Disengagement), the army concentrated forces on the border of the Strip for an offensive of this scale on Gaza. But then the United States imposed a veto. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice arrived for an emergency visit that was described as acrimonious and stormy, and the army was forced to back down.

Now, the time has finally come. With the Islamophobia of the U.S. administration at a high point, it appears that the United States is prepared to authorize such an operation, on condition that it not provoke a global outcry with excessively reported attacks on civilians.

With the green light for the offensive given, the army's only concern is public image. Fishman reported that the army is worried that "what threatens to bury this huge military and diplomatic effort" is reports of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Hence, the army will have to let some food into Gaza. From this perspective, it is necessary to feed the Palestinians in Gaza so that it would be possible to continue to kill them undisturbed.

Tanya Reinhart is a lecturer at Tel Aviv University and the University of Utrecht. She is the author of several books, including *Israel/Palestine: How to End the 1948 War*. This article was first published in *Yediot Aharonot* on June 21, 2006.

injuries, as the Israelis had destroyed his lab. While the Ministry of Health has asked the international medical community to send medical personnel to investigate, Dr. Al Sakaa said "no one has lifted a finger."

Israeli forces use sophisticated killing tactics in the Gaza Strip. In 2004 and before it was tank shells packed with thousands of flechettes, razor-sharp steel darts that shred bodies.

In 2005 it was the razing of much of Rafah on the southern Gaza Strip. Thousands of Palestinians were rendered homeless as the Israelis blew up their houses, row by row, at the border with Egypt. Sewage ran through the alleys, flooded what was left and was all churned under by Israeli bulldozers. At the same time, with less press, the northern Strip was razed, one olive tree root at a time, the fertile red soil overturned, with lines of people fleeing, nowhere to go.

From the beginning of the intifada in 2000, the Israeli strategy was to shoot to cripple, wounding an astonishing 7,000 Palestinians during the first month alone. Israeli soldiers are taught to shoot for the knees and eyes, to leave devastating injuries. The purpose, as the *Jerusalem Post* stated at the time, was "to deprive the Palestinians of the massive number of casualties the army maintains Palestinians

injury zone" they claimed in the towns of Beit Hanoun and Beit Lahiya. That area once fed the entire Strip and parts of the West Bank, the "land of milk and honey" itself. Now little remains other than the resistance fighters with their homemade projectiles.

The current picture is part and parcel of the ethnic cleansing. The Israeli excuse for killing entire families, such as that of Dr. Nabil Abu Salami's, is a captured soldier. However, one must not neglect what an *Al Quds* daily editorial in July stated about this soldier. "This was a soldier in a tank. He was not coming to give candy and gifts to our children. He was coming to kill them."

Add that Israeli soldier to the 10,000 Palestinian political prisoners currently in Israeli jails and you have 10,001 political prisoners. Armed resistance forces say they have not given up. They ask for a trade, for the women and children in Israeli prisons to go free.

The Israeli government decided to kill more Palestinians instead. The U.S.-led economic and political blockade is starving people to death, and now it is time to attack Lebanon for Hezbollah and Syria for its support of the democratically elected Palestinian government.

The United States demanded elections and when it didn't like the result, it imposed the

>> The Israeli excuse for killing entire families, such as that of Dr. Nabil Abu Salami's, is a captured soldier.

want in order to win world support and consolidate their fight for independence."

Now, Israeli attacks are rampant throughout the Strip. Killings in the north, including Jabaliya Refugee Camp, the most densely populated place on earth, are filling the local front pages. But Palestinians can't get any international press attention.

The Israeli began the reoccupation inside the northern Strip months ago with the "isolate and threatened banks that transferred money to Palestinians. This was in addition to its financial, political and moral support of the Israeli occupation. Hamas won, and that is the current Israeli excuse.

The Israeli point of view is clear. No Palestinian will survive if they fight or offend the occupier by simply trying to live, whether in the West Bank or the devastated and "withdrawn-from" Gaza Strip.

The AP photos in this spread were sent to As'ad Abu Khalil by Hanady Salman, an editor at *As-Safir* in Lebanon. Abu Khalil is from Tyre, Lebanon originally and runs the "Angry Arab News Service" at angryarab.blogspot.com. Salman sent a note along with the photos (part of which follows). She claims that the dead civilians in the two photographs were told by Israeli forces to evacuate their village of Ter Haifa before being bombed. "You will all have to excuse me for sending this. It's pictures of the bodies of babies killed by the Israelis in South Lebanon. They are all burnt. I need your help. I am almost certain these pictures won't be published in the West, although they are Associated Press pictures. I need your help exposing them if you can."



Editor's note: The following report has been posted on various blogs and is said to be a letter from "Rasha" to a friend in Israel. This version has been excerpted and edited for style.

BEIRUT, Lebanon—I am writing now from a cafe, in West Beirut's Hamra district. It is filled with people who are trying to escape the pull of 24-hour news reporting. Like me. The electricity has been cut off for a while now, and the city has been surviving on generators. The old system that was so familiar at the time of the war, where generators were allowed a lull to rest, is back.

The cafe is dark, hot and humid. Espresso machines and blenders are silenced. Conversations, rumors, frustrations waft through the room. I am better off here than at home, following the news, live, on-the-spot documentation of our plight in soundbites. The sound of Israeli warplanes overwhelms the air on occasion.

They drop leaflets to conduct a "psychological" war. Yesterday, their sensitivity training urged them to advise inhabitants of the southern suburbs to flee because the night promised to be "hot." Today, the leaflets warn that they plan to bomb all other bridges and tunnels in Beirut. People are flocking to supermarkets to stock up on food.

This morning, I wrote in my emails that the targets seem to be strictly Hezbollah sites and their constituencies. Now, I regret typing that. They will escalate. Until a few hours ago, they had only bombed the runways of the airport, as if to "limit" the damage. A few hours ago, four shells were dropped on the buildings of our brand new shining airport.

The night was harrowing. The southern suburbs and the airport were bombed, from air and sea. The apartment where I am living has a magnificent view of the bay of Beirut. I could see the Israeli warships firing at their leisure. It is astounding how comfortable they are in our skies, in our waters; they just travel around and deliver their violence and congratulate themselves.

The cure French-speaking and English-speaking bourgeoisie have fled to the Christian mountains. A long-standing conviction is that the Israelis will not target Lebanon's Christian "populated" mountains. Maybe this time they will be proven wrong?

The Gulfies, Saudis, Kuwaiti and other expatriates have all fled out of the country, in Pullman buses via Damascus, before the road was bombed. They were supposed to be the economic lifeline of this country. The contrast in their sense of panic as opposed to the defiance of the inhabitants of the southern suburbs was almost comical.

This time, however, I have to admit, I am tired of defying whatever for whatever cause. There is no cause really. There are only sinister post-Kissingerian type negotiations. I can almost hear his hateful voice rationalizing laconically as he does the destruction of a country, the deaths of families, people with dreams and ambitions so the Israelis can win something more, always more.

The short-term military strategy seems to be to cripple transport and communications. And power stations. The southern region has now been reconfigured into small enclaves that cannot communicate between one another. Most have enough fuel, food and supplies to last them until tomorrow, but after that the isolation of each enclave will lead to tragedy. Mayors and governors have been screaming for help on the TV.

This is all bringing back echoes of 1982, the Israeli siege of Beirut. My living nightmare. It was summer then as well. The Israeli army marched through the south and besieged Beirut. For three months, the Reagan administration kept dispatching urges for the Israeli military to act with restraint. And the Israelis assured them they were acting appropriately.

We had the PLO command in West Beirut then. I felt safe with the hand-some fighters. How I miss them. Between Hezbollah and the Lebanese army I don't feel safe. We are exposed, defenseless, parthenic. And I am older, more aware of danger. I am 37 years old and actually scared. I am not defiant, there is no more fight left in me.

I am furthermore pissed off because no one knows how hard the postwar reconstruction was to all of us. Hariri did not make miracles. Every single bridge and tunnel and highway, the runways of that airport, all of these things were built from our sweat and brow, at three times the real cost because every member of government, because every character in the ruling Syrian junta, because the big players in the Hariri administration and beyond were all thieves.

Everyone one of us had two jobs (I am not referring to the ruling elite), paid backbreaking taxes and wages to feed the "social covenant." We fought and fought that neoliberal onslaught, the arrogance of economic consultants and the greed of creditors just to have a nice country that functioned at a minimum, where things got done, that stood on its feet, more or less. A thriving Arab civil society.

Social safety nets were given up, healthcare for all, unions were broken and co-opted, public spaces taken over, and we bowed our heads and agreed. Palestinian refugees were pushed deeper and deeper into forgetting, hidden from sight and consciousness, "for the preservation of their identity" we were told, and we accepted.

In exchange we had a secular country where the Hezbollah and the Lebanese Forces could co-exist and fight their fights in parliament not with bullets. We bit hard on our tongues and stiffened our upper lip, we protested and were defeated, we took the streets, defied army-imposed curfews, time after time, to protect that modicum of civil rights, that modicum of a semblance of democracy, and it takes one air raid for all our sacrifices and tolls to be blown to smithereens. It's not about the airport; it's what we built in the postwar.

I am tired of spending days and nights waiting not to die from a shell, on target or astray. Watching poor people bludgeoned, homeless and preparing to mourn. I am so weary...

The Bombs of July

A REPORT FROM BEIRUT

first person

Civilization and its Discontent

BY DONALD PANETH

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y.—From the Shiite and Sunni districts of Baghdad to Gaza, Israel, Lebanon and the commuter rail lines of Mumbai, violence ravaged the world July 10–14.

People died. In news reports, the number of dead and wounded rose hourly.

Yet, at the U.N. headquarters, activity was minimal and action was nil. The silence of failure was heard. Since the end of the Cold War, the United Nations has only served as an instrument in the service of the United States.

On July 10, U.N. agencies working in the Palestinian territories said that the poverty rate in Gaza had reached nearly 80 percent, unemployment almost 40 percent, and that an already alarming situation was deteriorating rapidly.

On July 11, a U.N. report warned that a weak U.S. dollar was threatening the world economy.

In Paris, on July 12, the U.S., China, Russia, and the European Union decided to go back to the U.N. Security Council with the issue of Iran's nuclear program.

The U.S. vetoed a draft Council resolution on July 13 that would have demanded a halt to Israel's military offensive in Gaza.

On July 14 the tone and atmosphere at headquarters changed, becoming more urgent, but activity remained scarcely perceptible.

The world was very rapidly approaching a combustible point of no return – general war in the Middle East.

Why?

Explanations are as numerous and understandable as the multiple factors that are contributing to the spiraling violence.

Present and future events, based on past events, are predictable. But understanding requires investigation, honesty, the application of disinterested intelligence.

Sources of understanding – explanations as well as solutions – abound, and are to be found in books, studies, reports, essays, philosophical treatises, works of imaginative literature that go back at least to Diderot's *Encyclopédie* (1751–1780).

Other useful texts include those by Karl Marx, Arnold Toynbee, Sigmund Freud, Simone Weil, Erich Neumann, Louis-Ferdinand Céline, and that of the U.N. charter.

Marx developed an economic interpretation of history, a social philosophy, analysis of the economics of capitalism, contradictions between the ruling class and its subjects, the offenses of imperialism and war.

Toynbee, in his 12-volume *Study of History* examined the growth, development and decay of civilizations. He published another book, *The World and the West*, declaring that during the past four-and-a-half centuries, "the West has been the aggressor on the whole."

Simone Weil, an extraordinary personality, thinker, writer, and activist, composed among other notable works, a superb essay, "The Iliad or the Poem of Force," on man, war, and slaughter, on force, which she saw as standing in the "very center of human history."

Perhaps the peoples of Europe would yet learn "not to admire force, not to hate the enemy, nor to scorn the unfortunate," she wrote. "How soon this will happen is another question."

The others – Freud, Neumann, Céline – are no less enlightening. The trouble is that they are not taken as seriously or studied as carefully as they might be.

The U.N. charter, a political achievement, has never been put into effect as written because of U.S. determination to control the organization. Specifically, articles 43, 45, 46, and 47 with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression have never been put into effect.

That failure, sustained by the U.S., Great Britain and France, largely accounts for the failure of the U.N., the spread of militarism, the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the unending succession of wars.

THE MIDDLE EAST

The Highway to Hell



LEBANON SHELLED: Shown above is one of the 60 Israeli air raids on Lebanon since July 13. These raids have resulted in at least 197 civilians killed with 350 injured. PHOTO: HANADY SALMAN OF AS-SAFIR NEWSPAPER.

BY A.K. GUPTA

It's wildfire season in the Middle East. Once again, brushfires have merged into a conflagration, threatening the entire region. But there are no firefighters rushing to the rescue, just pyromaniacs in Washington and Tel Aviv stoking the blaze.

By itself, the United States – armer and funder of Israel – could stop the collective punishment of Palestine and Lebanon. But the White House opted instead to block calls to halt Israel's assault, and had Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice egg on Israel by saying a ceasefire had to be "sustainable," a message to continue bombing until Hezbollah is destroyed. (As journalist Pepe Escobar notes, this would be tantamount to eliminating Hezbollah's base – 1.5 million Lebanese Shiites.)

The dismemberment of Lebanon is not about retrieving two captured soldiers, any more than invading Iraq was about Sept. 11. The United States and Israel are trying to redraw the geo-political map.

For the United States, "the broader goal is to strangle the axis of Hezbollah, Hamas, Syria and Iran," noted the *Washington Post*.

Time Magazine added further insight: "Iran provides crucial support to Syria, Hamas and Hezbollah, the three Arab play-

ers most visibly defying American and Israeli designs for the Middle East."

What are those designs? The same they've been since President Roosevelt met King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia in 1945 and struck a deal of military support and aid for the medieval kingdom in exchange for access to its oil.

There would be no need for a U.S. military presence in the Middle East today if not for the oil. Israel's role is to keep the Arab nations divided and eliminate any threat to its regional dominance. That's what it did in '67 against Egypt, in '82 against Syria and in '81 with the bombing of Iraq's nuclear reactor. Israel's history from 1948 also negates the myth of "Israel the victim." With the exception of the '73 war it has been the aggressor every time.

Iran is the latest threat, perhaps because it is oil rich. Almost all the Arab rulers mouth opposition to U.S. and Israeli colonialism all the while contriving with them. Now, the silence of Egypt and Jordan and the criticism of Hezbollah by Saudi Arabia will certainly not pass unnoticed by the Arab street.

Having neutralized these states, United States and Israel continue to rely on overwhelming violence, which feeds the growth of resistance movements and "non-state actors" like Hamas, Hezbollah, the Iraqi resistance, al Qaeda, etc. There will likely be a further growth in political (and

puritanical) Islam, increasing the chance of a social explosion that upsets the regional order. The rise of these groups, in turn, provides justification for the war on terror.

For the moment the Bush administration is constrained politically and economically. Attacking Iran would send oil above \$100 and bring the global economy crashing down. But that hasn't stopped the neo-cons from calling on the United States to march on Damascus and Tehran. "This is our war, too," wrote *Weekly Standard* editor William Kristol.

Predictably, the U.S. media blamed Iran and Syria for the crisis. No such evidence exists, it's all speculation: Iran and Syria benefit from the conflict; they are Hezbollah's sponsors; they are trying to display their importance to the West; they are trying to deflect U.S. pressure.

Neither Syria nor Iran has much to gain from a conflict. While they can amplify the disaster in Iraq in retaliation for being attacked, their military capabilities are minimal. For its part, Israel would like nothing more than to reduce Syria to rubble or bomb Iran's nuclear fuel facilities. Attacking Hezbollah now benefits Israel by making it easier to attack Iran later.

Despite the unequal military forces – a few score rockets randomly lobbed daily hardly equates with decimating Lebanon's infrastructure or turning 500,000 people into refugees – Hezbollah still holds the upper hand politically. As much as it and its supporters claim otherwise, the raid capturing two Israeli soldiers was probably linked to the war on Gaza. Events in the Middle East don't happen in a vacuum.

Nonetheless, Hezbollah knows that Israel will eventually agree to a prisoner swap. By resisting Israel, its credentials have been burnished in the region and the continued Israeli bombing will only swing more Lebanese support behind it.

It's unlikely that the crippled state that emerges in Lebanon will have the will, desire or ability to serve as Israel's gendarme and secure the border regions. One question is if Israel's purpose is to provoke civil war in Lebanon, as it has tried (unsuccessfully, so far) to do in Gaza.

The Israeli military claims to have learned from its disastrous 1982 invasion of Lebanon, but there is already talk about sending in "massive ground forces." Israel is preparing the way by depopulating South Lebanon. If it does invade, then anyone who remains will be a target. It's a recipe for slaughter and disaster.

New Yorkers from all walks of life protest outside the Israeli consulate in Manhattan on July 18.

PHOTO: ULA KURAS



MEXICO



RECOUNT DEMANDED: 1.1 million supporters of leftist candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador gathered in the center of Mexico City on July 16 to demand that authorities recount all the votes in that nation's closely contested presidential election. PHOTO: FARIDEE CRUZ

Can Street Heat Reverse Defeat?

BY MATT PASCARELLA

MEXICO CITY—It was July 2, election night, a little before 11pm. While we wait for Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) candidate, to make his victory speech, Luis Carlos Ugalde, the head of the Election Commission (IFE), appears on massive television screens throughout the room and announces that the election is too close to call.

The next president of Mexico, we are told, will not be named until Wednesday, July 5. The room, full of supporters and press, is suddenly quiet — all one can hear are whispers of “miércoles?”

After a few minutes Lopez Obrador appears and tells the crowd, “We know we won. We are up by 500,000 votes.”

Nearly a half-hour later, the National Action Party (PAN) candidate Felipe Calderón appears on TV, and announces, “There is not the slightest doubt that we have won the election.”

No one realized it at the time, but the stage was being set for a fight that will continue into August — and could even stretch into September.

Two days after the IFE announce the preliminary results, showing Felipe Calderón ahead of Obrador by a meager 0.6 percent. On that same day I met with an Election Commission representative who admitted nearly 3 million ballots from 11,184 polling places had yet to be counted. She wouldn’t say if these ballots would be included in the official count, but was “confident those votes wouldn’t change the outcome.”

The following day, July 5, the Electoral Commission began the official count, not a vote-by-vote count, but rather, an accounting of tally sheets attached to every ballot box.

In the morning, representatives of the PRD gathered at a news conference and asserted that irregularities had taken place throughout the election process. Members of the press pushed the PRD to label it “fraud” but they refused to take that direction, deciding instead to stick to the legal route and play out the process.

Taxi drivers and others I spoke with on the street that day told me they were frustrated the PRD was not calling for mass mobiliza-

tions because, as the security guard at my hotel told me, “Calderón is trying to steal it ... Everyone knows the PAN committed fraud and we need to do something about it.”

Early in the morning on July 6, the Election Commission announced the results of their tally sheet count: Felipe Calderón was now ahead of Lopez Obrador by only 0.5 percent.

Based on this count, many reporters declared Felipe Calderón the new president of Mexico. Yet, what most failed to mention is that the Election Commission is not the body responsible for officially announcing the next president.

Rather, it is the Electoral Tribunal that will make an official announcement after addressing complaints filed by each party. The Electoral Tribunal, a supposedly non-partisan, independent body, has the responsibility to examine statements brought to them before making a final decision. It will have to consider issues cited in the PRD’s complaint such as:

- Why hundreds of thousands of ballots have yet to be included in any count;
- Why ballots have been found, literally, in the trash;
- Why there was a massive amount of “drop-off,” i.e., where people showed up to vote but did not cast a vote for president;
- Why, on Election Day, poll workers in places like Querétaro and Salamanca were caught on video stuffing ballot boxes and changing tally sheets;
- The use and role of public expenditures on Calderón’s campaign;
- The pro-Calderón intervention of current president Vicente Fox (a member of PAN), which is illegal according to the Electoral Commission’s rules.

Overall, the PRD is citing irregularities in more than 30 percent of the precincts throughout the country.

Based on an optimistic reading of the IFE’s track record in previous smaller elections where it demanded recounts and exposed cases of fraud, the Electoral Tribunal may, indeed, call for further investigation, demand a vote-by-vote count, or even annul the election. But Obrador and his supporters don’t seem to be taking any chances.

Obrador’s constituency includes the indigenous, poor, grassroots movements, business-

men and even former members of the PRI — the party that controlled Mexico for some 70 years. In 1994 he ran for governor of Tabasco but lost after a battle revolving around his opponent’s supposed illegal use of public monies. In 2000 Obrador was elected mayor of Mexico City and quickly became known for policies benefiting the poor. Even last year, Obrador had to fight to get on the ballot. Ultimately, it was his supporters’ willingness to mobilize that secured his spot in the election.

On Saturday July 8, six days following the election, nearly half a million people gathered in Mexico City’s Zócalo, one of the largest squares in the world, for an “informative assembly” organized by the PRD. People of all ages, from as far away as Tabasco, waited for Obrador to address them chanting, “Vota por vota, casilla por casilla.” (“Vote by vote, polling place by polling place.”)

Obrador announced a nationwide mobilization to begin that Wednesday. The crowd, waving the yellow flags of the PRD and holding signs claiming fraud, shouted in response, “No está solo” (“you are not alone”). Obrador called for calm and asked that his supporters not shut down roads (which would cripple the Mexican economy) that, ultimately, they would win together through the government’s own institutions.

The next week people began marching from every state in Mexico and an estimated 1.1 million people converged in the Zócalo on July 16 for another mass meeting. Further mobilizations to pressure the Electoral Tribunal were called.

Depending on what happens, Obrador may face two options: Admit defeat or step outside the political institutions altogether, capitalizing on his popular support, to pressure the system. Right now he is balancing between continuing down the legal route and proceeding with mobilizations aimed at pressuring the Electoral Tribunal. If he decides to go outside the system, it could cause political, social and economic paralysis, which, in turn, would mean he would likely have to sacrifice broader support. But he may have to do just that.

Matt Pascarella is a freelance reporter and an award-winning researcher and producer for investigative journalist Greg Palast.

World briefs

GLOBAL WARMING SPARKS PROTESTS IN RUSSIA, WILDFIRES IN THE AMAZON

37 protesters were arrested July 15 outside the G8 summit in St. Petersburg, Russia as the leaders of the world’s seven wealthiest nations plus Russia discussed “market-based responses” to threats facing global energy supplies. The plans of G8 leaders emphasize continued reliance on oil, gas, coal and nuclear power. Meanwhile, the environmental consequences of the greenhouse gas emissions caused by fossil fuel usage continue to grow.



>> The first six months of 2006 were the sixth-warmest to date, with global land- and ocean-surface temperatures .90 degrees F above average. The month of June proved to be the second-warmest since records began in 1880, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA).

>> The unprecedented drought that hit the Amazon basin last summer is threatening a repeat appearance this year. Brazil’s Acre region recently went 40 days in June and July without rain, the (UK) *Guardian* reported. Last year’s drought, fueled by higher Atlantic sea temperatures and massive deforestation, was the worst in a century and dried out large portions of the usually lush basin, causing Brazil to declare a state of emergency. This year, forests are so dry that they are under threat of wildfires.

>> The larger and more damaging wildfires that have been occurring in the western United States over the past two decades are directly linked to global warming, according to a report published July 6 in the online edition of the journal *Science*. Higher summer temperatures and the earlier arrival of spring caused by global warming have helped create drier forests that are more susceptible to wildfires. When burned, the trees release large amounts of carbon dioxide into the air, further fueling global warming.

HAITIAN PROTESTERS DEMAND ARISTIDE RETURN

Thousands of supporters of former Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide marched to Haiti’s National Palace on July 15 to demand his return. Aristide, a champion of the poor, was Haiti’s first democratically elected president. He was ousted in a U.S.-backed coup in February 2004 and has spent the past two years in exile in South Africa. Haiti, the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, has been occupied by U.N. troops since Aristide’s ouster. Former Aristide ally René Preval was elected president in February and has remained non-committal about Aristide’s future. The U.S. is vehemently opposed to Aristide’s return.

ZIDANE GOES HEAD-TO-HEAD WITH FIFA

As *The Independent* goes to press, FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association), is set to summon Zinedine Zidane to a disciplinary hearing about his headbutt on Marco Materazzi in the waning moments of the World Cup final between France and Italy. Hailed as the symbol of a newfound French multiculturalism after leading the country to the World Cup in 1998, Zidane, of Algerian descent, says he “regrets nothing” after attacking his opponent for allegedly slurring his mother and sister. According to a poll in *Le Parisien*, 61 percent of the French already forgive their idol, an attitude that sharply contrasts with the public outrage towards protests by French of immigrant descent last fall.

A Stone Mason's Story

**DISUNITED
BROTHERHOODS:
RACE RACKETEERING AND
THE FALL OF THE NEW YORK
CONSTRUCTION UNIONS**
BY GREGORY BUTLER
IUNIVERSE, INC., 2006

Greg Butler is a thinking man. As the sun gazes through the ferns of his West Harlem apartment, you can see that he's at home in his study, armchair facing the computer and hundreds of tomes weighing down the wooden bookcase. Butler is more than happy to roll off facts, dates and personalities involving labor history. But he doesn't carry a rarefied or distanced manner; in the midst of a story he'll roll off a laugh so loud it puts you at ease. Perhaps in another life he would have been a professor at City College, which towers across the street. For now he's happy to be a self-cultivated intellectual with the publication of his first book, *Disunited Brotherhoods: Race, Racketeering and Fall of the New York Construction Trades* under his belt.

A native New Yorker, growing up in a bi-racial/left wing family, Butler always had a deep respect for blue-collar work. After working a number of factory jobs, he heard about an opening in the carpenters union. He entered the apprentice program in hopes of making a decent living. He soon found out otherwise. "There are two unions" Butler says. "The one where a very tiny minority gets all the available work and the other union where 80 percent spend most of the year laid off."

Seeing his laid-off brothers and sisters (who were mostly of color) inspired Butler to activism, notably writing. A Communist Party (CP) member at the time, he approached the CP about a shop newsletter on carpenter politics. The CP rebuffed him fearing accusations of being anti-union. "The left tends to be uncritical of unions" Butler observes. "But what they were saying and what I was seeing was two different things."

A man of action, Butler launched his own list-serve called Gangbox: Workers News Service (A gangbox is where carpenters store their tools). Since the list-serve inception in 1999 it has grown to over 650 subscribers, receives 2,000 hits per month and has even been circulated at job sites.

Disunited Brotherhoods, a collection of essays from Gangbox is a unique history that takes on the



Pons Replenishing by Mria Magdalena Campos, 1998.
PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Chains of History

Say slavery in New York and a miasma develops over your listener's eyes. Isn't New York the North? Wasn't it home to Frederick Douglass and abolitionists like Horace Greeley. Yes, New York was a hotbed of opposition to slavery, but it was home to slaves from the Dutch landing until manumission in 1827. Only in recent years has the presence of enslaved Africans been documented at the African Burial Ground near City Hall and more recently, two

issues of race, class and gender in the New York construction trade. "Race and racism has always been a cornerstone of the New York construction" says Butler. "Going back to the Dutch settlements, slaves built the docks as well as constructed Broadway."

Despite this contribution, African-Americans and other people of color were always barred from trade unions. During most of the

20th Century, construction unions in New York were 95 percent white. Indeed, when the Plumbers union was forced to take in Black and Latin apprentices in 1968 it called a city-wide strike.

The construction unions were also a bastion of reaction in the city; President Nixon embraced construction workers who beat up antiwar

protesters at the foot of Wall Street in the infamous "Hardhat



JOSE CARMONA

Riots" four days after the shootings at Kent State in May 1970. This had led many on the left to describe construction workers as brought off bigoted Archie Bunker types. Butler paints a different picture as Black communists and revolutionary nationalists, inspired by civil rights and urban rebellions began to take on the power of the unions.

Groups like Harlem Fightback organized school buses of unemployed workers to desegregate construction sites by any means necessary. Fighting pitched battles with baseball bats and metal pipes, these activists forced then Mayor John Lindsay to call for the inclusion of more women and people of color in the trades.

The results were astounding; within a 20-year period the construction trade went from being all-white to majority people of color. Still, the fiscal crisis of the 1970s slowed the process of change. When rent-control laws were weakened, landlords realized they could make more money if they forced residents out and rent the apartments at market rate. This meant arson on a mass scale. Over half of New York's apartment stock was burnt to the ground. In

order to save money, the city (pressured by landlords) began to allow for the contracting of non-union labor, paid under the table, with no benefits. "It got so bad that firms provided lunch because the workers couldn't afford to eat out" Butler says.

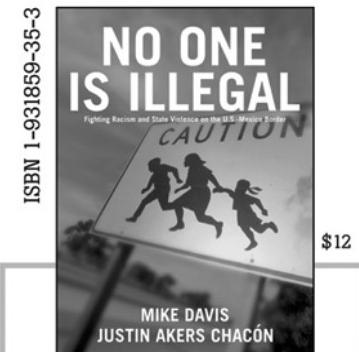
The weakening of the New York construction unions has not left Butler in despair. He hopes that a movement will develop from below, adopting the same direct-action tactics that brought about radical changes in the 1960s. "I think we can learn a lot from the immigrant marches this past spring. I think that's the future of our movement."

For now, Butler is concentrating on his next book *Lost Towers*, an exposé of the World Trade Center clean-up. Despite the positive reception he has received at readings for *Disunited Brotherhoods*, Butler doesn't consider himself a working-class hero. "I just want to tell the untold story; we always hear about the pharaoh, now let's hear about the stone mason."

Gangbox can be found at <http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/>

—KAZEMBE BALAGOUN

DADA
THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
JUNE 18–SEPTEMBER 11, 2006



Dada: Stop Making Nonsense

It's appalling to discover that, more than 80 years after Dada's initial collapse, the massive Dada exhibit currently at MoMa is the first of its kind in the United States. Still, better late than never and as now seems a perfect time to explore this post-World War I "anti-art" non-collective.

A media-crossing whirlwind of individualized artistic activity, Dada as a whole is nearly impossible to define; of course, this is partly intended since Dada was always more not something than anything else. If that sounds like nonsense, it's only appropriate for a group of painters, sculptors, writers, and filmmakers who treasured absurdity, play, non-conformity and chance in pursuit of a new kind of art.

Still, it's not by accident that this brief movement came on the heels of World War I; in fact, seeing this exhibit in the context of the war in Iraq, it's hard not to read Dada as concretely anti-war. The exhibit itself emphasizes this from the outset, complete with a monitor showing war footage at the entrance and a multitude of Dada artist's statements reinforcing this perspective. Though organized by country, several artists, like Marcel Duchamp, appear in multiple rooms, echoing

the note on a jointly-signed manifesto claiming no single nationality.

The exhibit provides two entrances, Zurich and New York, but it's advisable to start with Zurich to honor Swiss pacifism and so one can end with Duchamp's groundbreaking, still-provocative readymades.

Of course, almost everything here is groundbreaking and hugely influential on modern art as a whole, from the gorgeous early photo collages of Hannah Hoch and Raoul Hausmann to Man Ray's haunting photograms and pre-air-brushing aerographs.

Max Ernst shows glimpses of the surrealist movement to follow, while Francis Picabia offers an array of satirical periodicals and anti-canonical paintings.

Kurt Schwitters' paper collages use chance and layer found objects pre-Rauschenberg, while Johannes Baader's show a heavy use of text. The films, especially Hans Richter's bizarre *Ghosts Before Breakfast* and René Clair's *Entr'acte* play like acid-dosed city symphonies.

The Berlin Dadaists called themselves mechanics, so machines and technical approaches influence the majority of work here from Fernand Léger's film *Ballet Mécanique* to

Duchamp's moving sculptures. Finally, Duchamp's readymades make it clear how we're still wrestling with his brilliant questioning of what an art work can be.

The best Dada works are the ones that heighten the unresolved tension, the inherent contradictions of the movement itself while still maintaining a (naughty) childlike sense of play and provocation. Like the snot-nosed brats of punk that would later carry forth the Dada

spirit, the artists here discover ingenious breakthroughs in the guise of simply taking the piss. Clearly, there's something liberating in claiming to be anti-everything, or more accurately, anti-status quo in its various political, historical and cultural incarnations. And inside the absurdity, it's hard to miss the furious revolt against a brand of reason and logic that would lead innocent young soldiers into early graves.

—CHARLIE BASS



René Clair's *Entr'acte*

film

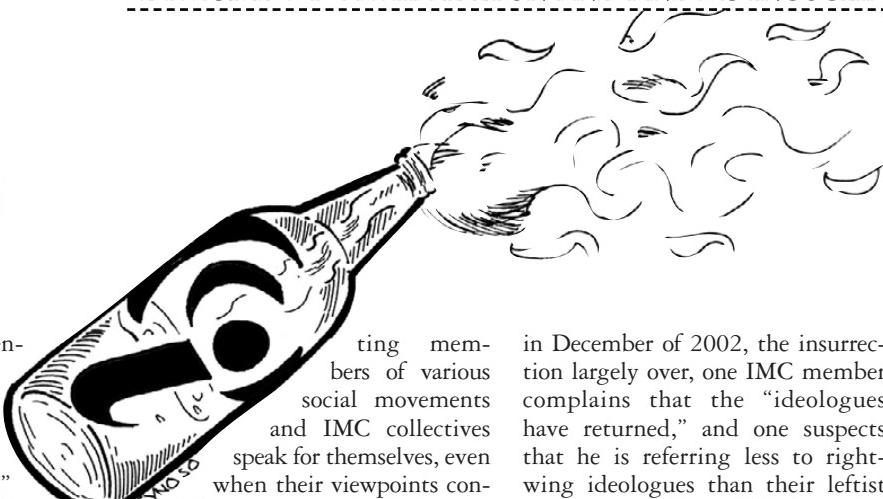
Indymedia: The Movie

Political theorist Sheldon Wolin has written movingly of what he calls "fugitive democracy": the pure democratic moment, unencumbered by institutionalized hierarchy and vibrating with the strength of the revolutionary multitude. "i," the powerful and occasionally frustrating new film by independent directors Raphael Lyon and Andres Ingoglia, tells of one such democratic moment, the Argentinean economic collapse of 2001 and the social uprisings that accompanied it. Along the way it also functions as one of the first feature length films about the Independent Media Center (IMC, or Indymedia) movement, which chronicled the Argentine struggle as it unfolded.

"i" is divided into three parts. The first, "Microscope," examines the Argentinean uprising and the development of the Argentina IMC; the second, "Telescope," continues to ground its narrative in Argentina but expands the conver-

sation to include more general ruminations and debates about the meaning and purpose of the Indymedia movements; the third, "Mirror," briefly shifts its focus to New York City during the massive 2003 February 15th anti-war protests and then returns to Buenos Aires and the Plaza Mayo for the first anniversary of the December 2001 uprising against conservative President Fernando De la Rúa.

The focus on Indymedia activity in Argentina is one of the strongest aspects of this beautifully shot film as the activities, organization, and struggles of radical media of the Global South are often overlooked or misunderstood. "i" is a galloping, careening, tornado of a film, often pausing briefly to listen in on one collective debate about the nature of Indymedia before moving on to the next crisis. One senses that the film's directors are straining mightily to remove themselves and their own perspective from the narrative, let-



ting members of various social movements and IMC collectives speak for themselves, even when their viewpoints conflict or seem contradictory.

It is this barely controlled chaos, this sense of parachuting into history that, paradoxically, is also "i"'s greatest weakness. It's hard to imagine that anyone not already familiar with the history, structure, and background of the Indymedia movement will learn much about the network or what makes it tick – there is simply too much information for anyone not schooled in radical media history and leftist politics to absorb easily. In this way, of course, "i" resembles the websites of the media movement that it chronicles: intuitively understandable for many, a collection of sprawling, disorganized, headache-inducing data for some.

The film ends on an odd, ambiguous note. Back at the Plaza de Mayo

in December of 2002, the insurrection largely over, one IMC member complains that the "ideologues have returned," and one suspects that he is referring less to right-wing ideologues than their leftist counterparts. Many of the Argentine IMC members speak about their disillusionment with concepts such as "journalism" and "news," the dangers of media consumerism, and the need to dissolve the Indymedia Argentina into social movements themselves. What this means in practice, of course, is not entirely clear. "What may be needed is a new communication paradigm," the film's voice-over narrator concludes. "What may be needed is a leap of faith."

"i" premieres July 20 in New York at Bluestockings at 172 Allen. For press inquiries, contact Amy Dalton (267-974-0624). To book a screening and/or a speaking engagement, email jenan-gel@riseup.net.

—CHRIS ANDERSON

No One Is Illegal debunks the leading ideas behind the often-violent right-wing backlash against immigrants by putting a human face on the immigrants who risk their lives crossing the border to work in the United States.

MIKE DAVIS AND JUSTIN AKERS CHACÓN
NO ONE IS ILLEGAL
FIGHTING RACISM AND STATE VIOLENCE ON THE BORDER

"In an environment where the Right sets the agenda and where liberal opposition sidelines itself in the debate, any discussion of immigration is corrupted by a litany of lies and deceptions. While vigilantes go unchallenged in the streets, so too do the misconceptions that they exploit to take advantage of peoples' fears and uncertainties. While opposition has been absent from liberal organizations, grassroots efforts ... will determine in which direction immigration politics will go in the next years."

From *No One is Illegal*

Available in June, pre-order at:
Haymarket Books.org



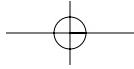
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SUNDAY, JULY 23 @ 7pm - \$10 SUGGESTED WORKSHOP: "OPPOSING ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE MOVEMENT"
Presenter April Rosenblum is a Philadelphia-based activist and author of *The Past Didn't Go Anywhere*, a pamphlet for radicals on resisting anti-Semitism. Peter Staudenmeier is a faculty member at the Institute for Social Ecology and author of *Fascist Ecology: The 'Green Wing' of the Nazi Party and its Historical Antecedents*. Eric Laursen, a writer, organizer and longtime global justice and antiwar activist, will moderate the discussion.

TUESDAY, JULY 25 @ 7PM - \$5 SUGGESTED WOMEN'S POETRY JAM & WOMEN'S OPEN MIKE
Featuring: Carole Maso & Stephanie Romeo Hosted by Vittoria Repetto, the hardest working guinea butch dyke on the Lower East Side. Sign-up starts at 7pm. Deliver (up to) 8 minutes of your poetry, prose, songs and spoken word.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 26 @ 7PM - \$5 SUGGESTED PERFORMANCE: RYAN HARVEY & AL BAKER Come on out for a night of foot tapping to new wave radical folk with Al Baker from the UK's Wildcat collective and Ryan Harvey of the Riot Folk collective

MONDAY, JULY 31 @ 7pm - FREE READING: KATHA POLLITT VIRGINITY OR DEATH!
In her new book of essays, *Virginity or Death!* Katha Pollitt showcases her keen insights and mordant wit.



INDYPENDENT TO HOST REPORTING WORKSHOP SERIES, AUG. 5 & 12!

Our two-part community reporting workshop series is for people from all walks of life who have both a passion for social justice and a keen interest in learning the basics of journalism. There is a suggested donation of \$20 but no one is turned away for lack of funds.

This is our fifth year of doing these workshops. Award-winning journalists from *The Indypendent* and *Democracy Now!* will cover the basics of lede writing and organizing a story, interviewing, research and more. The first part of the workshop is Sat. August 5 from 1 – 5pm and the second part is on Sat. August 12 at the same time. In our trainings, we emphasize participatory, hands-on exercises and small group discussions.

To register, call 212-221-0521 or e-mail indyjournalismworkshop@yahoo.com



PHOTOS: CHRIS ANDERSON

THE INDYPENDENT

has open meetings every Tuesday at 7pm imc-nyc-print@lists.indymedia.org at 4 West 43rd St., room 311.

SAT JULY 22

2:30pm • FREE
STOLEN LIVES INDUCTION CEREMONY
Fight police brutality and join families as they share stories of their loved ones killed by police.
St. Mary's Protestant Episcopal Church, 521 W 126th St.

2:4pm • FREE
OPEN-AIR DANCE AND PARTICIPATORY MOVEMENT EVENT to bring attention to the antiquated & restrictive NYC cabaret laws
79th St. & 5th Ave. (Mayor Bloomberg's house) • info@metropolisinmotion.org

SAT JUL 22 & SUN JUL 23

8am – 6pm • FREE (but bring \$\$)
BENEFIT: ART FOR CHANGE STOOP SALE. Clothes, books, shoes, toys, art, house stuff, etc.
Donations welcome.
At Art for Change, 1701 Lexington Ave. • incognitachikita@yahoo.com • 212-348-7044

SUN JULY 23

12pm – Sunset • FREE
SOLAR-POWERED MUSIC AND MARKET ON MANHATTAN'S EAST RIVER WATERFRONT. Citysol celebrates New York's sustainable future and green lifestyle.
23rd St. and Manhattan East Waterfront

2 – 6pm • FREE
THE SHADOW PRESENTS A FREE OLD-SCHOOL PUNK SHOW IN TOMPKINS SQUARE PARK!! Featuring the Undead, the Nihilistics, the Radicts, Gateria, Iconicide, and David Peel & The Lower East Side. Entertainment by Zero Boy. Hosted by Missy Galore. Brought to you by the May Day Organizing Committee, Don Yippie, the SHADOW and Those Fuckin' Anarchists!!
Tompkins Square Park (betw. 7th & 8th St., and Ave. A & B) • 212-631-1181

COMMUNITY CALENDAR July-August

6 – 9pm • FREE
WORKSHOP: BIKE RESCUE & REPAIR. Learn how to make found bike parts into working bicycles & build your own bike.
327 W 36th St. • Christian, 917-582-9010.

7pm • \$5 suggested
PERFORMANCE: AL BAKER FROM NORTHERN ENGLAND ON HIS "FOLK THE SYSTEM" TOUR. Lyrical folk-rock music that inspires and entertains.
Bluestockings, 172 Allen St. • 212-777-6028

WED JUL 26 – SAT JUL 29
"NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL LATINO FILM FESTIVAL: VANGUARD 2006."
Art for Change, 1701 Lexington Ave. • 212-348-7044

THURS JULY 27
7:30pm • \$6/\$10/\$15 suggested
FILM: *AMERICAN DREAM*
Documentary depicting the social, economic & emotional ramifications of a labor strike initiated by employees at a Hormel meatpacking plant in Austin, MN in 1986.
Brecht Forum, 451 West St. • 212-242-4201

THURS JUL 27 & FRI JUL 28
5 – 10pm, both nights • FREE (but bring \$\$ or check to buy art)
"IF THEY COME FOR YOU IN THE MORNING" BENEFIT ART SHOW FOR DANIEL MCGOWAN. Featuring work by David Ellis, Banksy, Swoon, Borf, Chris Stain, Arofisk, Kelly Burns and many more.
ABC No Rio, 156 Rivington St. • visual.resistance@gmail.com

FRI JULY 28
BENEFIT/FILM: *GUILIANI TIME*
Location and time TBA.
Sponsor: Harlem Tenants Council • 212-234-5005

SAT JULY 29
9pm – 3am • \$5-\$20
BENEFIT: "MILK SHAKES & ICE CREAM PART II." W/the entire Left Turn crew, music, dancing.
80 Wooster St. #4 • All you can drink, free milkshakes all night long • Sponsor: Left Turn magazine • www.leftturn.org & www.ideasforaction.org

THURS AUG 3
7:30pm • \$6/\$10/\$15 suggested
FILM: *THE CITY/LA CIUDAD* by David Riker, 1999. 4 short stories that dramatize the Latin-American immigrant experience.
Brecht Forum, 451 West St. • 212-242-4201

7pm • FREE
READING: "1968 AND I'M HITCHHIKING THROUGH EUROPE"
WITH JOE MACK. The adventures of a young American traveling through Europe during the Vietnam War.
Bluestockings, 172 Allen St. • 212-777-6028

FRI AUG 4
7pm • FREE
GRAND OPENING OF THE BROOKLYN WORKERS' CENTER.
Sponsor: National Mobilization Against Sweatshops, 93 3rd Ave., Bkln • 718-625-9091

SAT AUG 5
TBA • FREE
UNIVERSAL PEACE DAY CELEBRATION universalpeaceday.com/schedule.html

SAT AUG 5 & SUN AUG 6
10am – 6 pm • FREE (breakfast and lunch included!)
WORKSHOP: YOUTH ACTIVIST TRAINING: "FIND THE CONDOMS IN YOUR HIGH SCHOOL!" High schools in NYC are required to give students free condoms on request, but many don't. Open to high school students who want to learn how to fight for their rights.
119 W 24th St. • Sponsor: CHAMP • 212-937-7955 • sonny@champnetwork.org

SUN AUG 6
3:30 – 6pm • FREE
DISCUSSION: "THE LEGACY OF HIROSHIMA." Current war resistance, its impact on society & survivors; w/video presentation on survivors.
In commemoration of Hiroshima Day.
Asian American Art Centre, 26 Bowery • www.ArtSpiral.org

SUN AUG 6 – WED AUG 9
ACTION: DEMAND TO END THE WAR IN IRAQ. No military attacks on Iran or North Korea and global abolition of nuclear weapons. Protest at corporate offices of Bechtel. 212-868-5545, visit www.august6.org for details on location

SAT AUG 12
6pm • \$5 tickets
ROCK 'N' ROLL CONCERT. Come hear the music.
New York Society for Ethical Culture, 2 W 64th St. • www.williamaeroockcamp.org

SUN AUG 13
Contact for time • \$20 adv
Ticketmaster/\$30 door
MUSIC/BENEFIT: BLACK AUGUST HIP-HOP PROJECT, a celebration of hip-hop & freedom fighters. FREE the Angola 3, free the land. BB King's, 237 W 42d St., sponsored by Malcolm X Grassroots Movement • aritchied@aol.com • www.blackaugust.com

THROUGH AUG 11
Open Tue – Sun, 6 pm – midnight • FREE
EXHIBIT: A FORGOTTEN WAR: STORIES FROM NORTHERN UGANDA, photography by Samantha Casolari.
Art for Change, 1701 Lexington Ave. • 212-348-7044

THROUGH SEPT 3
Open Fri & Sat, noon – 6pm • FREE
EXHIBIT: "SELF-PORTRAIT." Works by 12 artists behind the graffiti movement.
Brecht Forum, 451 West St. • 212-619-2149

THROUGH SEPT 4
Tues – Sat. 11-6 • FREE
EXHIBIT: "IRAQI ART TODAY." Pomegranate Gallery, 133 Greene St, Soho • 212-260-4014

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